

"BOOKS WISE AND OTHERWISE."

A weekly causerie on current and ~~recent~~ ⁹⁰ general literature and new fiction, delivered by Captain C.H. Peters M.C. & Bar, General Manager of Robertson & Mullens Ltd, Melbourne, from Australia's premier broadcasting station, 3LO Melbourne.

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W. A. Peters.

I was not prepared for the surprise received as I read on into a new book "GREEN HILLS OF AFRICA" a book on big game hunting in African preserves. by Ernest Hemingway.

Of course I should have been ready for almost anything, for there on the title page was the name of the writer, the author of "A Farewell to Arms" - Ernest Hemingway, but never before has a book on big game hunting been written as this one.

Ernest Hemingway certainly secured some fine heads as trophies, made some marvellous shots, proved himself a sportsman of high quality, but he has written a book that flashes with his literary skill, with his impish quality of self-analysis, and with his genius for recreating scenes, people, and above all, the incident.

To open a book on big game hunting with a critical discussion and valuation of some modern writers is, well - unconventional, but Hemingway does it, discussing with a chance met Austrian in the heart of Rhodesia, James Joyce - Heinrich Mann, Ringelnatz, and others, this valuation proceeding from the Austrian's recognition of Hemingway's poetry in *Querschnitt*, a literary German magazine for which Hemingway had written what he describes as some rather

obscene poems, these are not quoted in this book.

And again while hunting Rhinocerous, he settles down to a wait, beguiling himself meanwhile with Tolstoy's Sevastopol which he savours and discusses.

His pleasant conversational method of description is so realistic that his colloquialisms descend to the most forceful and impolite expletives, but somehow they seem to be in place, part of the play, part of the atmosphere of big game hunting.

And while Hemingway is shooting his Kudu - his rhinocerous, his lion, and his many small deer, we are enabled to learn his opinions on many things; that Huckleberry Finn is the great book in modern American literature, but that to have it at its best you must stop where Nigger Jim is stolen from the boys - that is the real end.

And with Mark Twain, Hemingway will consent to bracket only Henry James and Stephen Crane, he hasn't read Thoreau but expects to do this later, to him time stretches limitlessly ahead for he says "I can do nearly everything later."

But we must come to the game-hunting, it really is the backbone of his book "GREEN HILLS OF AFRICA."

It is pleasant, he writes, to hunt "something that you want very much over a long period of time, being outwitted, out-maneuvred, and failing at the end of each day, but having the hunt and knowing everytime you are out that, sooner or later, your luck will change and that you will get the chance that you are seeking. But it is not pleasant to have a time limit by which you must get your kudu or

perhaps never get it, nor even see one." And while waiting at a salt lick for game to appear, he tells us: "I like to hunt sitting on my tail. No sweat, no nothing. Sit there and catch flies and feed them to the ant lions in the dust. I like it."

But he has his time limit and his licence allows him to kill only so many of certain named beasts, and as he wants the best skulls and horns as trophies we find him oftentimes in a dilemma whether to shoot or to wait for another chance for a better trophy, a chance which may not come to him after all.

Listen to his description of the despised hyena, so contemptible that his killing becomes an object of contemptuous mirth: "Highly humourous was the hyena obscenely loping, full belly dragging, at daylight on the plain, who, shot from the stern, skittered on into speed to tumble end over end. Mirth provoking was the hyena that stopped out of range by an alkali lake to look back and, hit in the chest, went over on his back, his four feet in the air. Nothing could be more jolly than the hyena coming suddenly wedge-headed and ~~stink~~ stinking out of high grass, hit at ten yards, who raced his tail in three narrowing, scampering circles until he died."

Yes, he says, the hyena was a dirty joke.

Then there is his friend Karl, off go the hunters in different directions, shooting over different countries - (countries is the term for a division of game areas), adventures in plenty come to Hemingway, wonderful record-breaking heads and horns fall to his Mannlicher rifle, he goes in triumph

back to the camp to find that Karl has trophies that are even better. Comical is his dismay, frankly he tells his readers of his nasty spirit of chagrin tracing his eventual acceptance in the best spirit of sportsmanship, but he admits that he does not accede at once.

His sportsmanship is displayed in his self-reproaches when having wounded a fine sable antelope bull, it travels away wounded, he cannot have his trophy, but that is not all, not, it is not his real regret - he is remorseful that the grand beast in pain and wounded will be pulled down and devoured that night by foul hyenas, who would gnaw out his entrails while yet alive. Hemingway writes: "I felt a so-and-so to have hit him and not killed him."

Here's another mood: "I lay in the shade with a breeze in the trees and read with no obligation and no compulsion to write, happy in knowing that at four o'clock we would be starting out to hunt again. I would not even write a letter. The only person I really cared about, except the children, was with me, and I had no wish to share this life with anyone who was not there, only to live it, being completely happy and quite tired. I knew that I was shooting well and I had that feeling of well-being and confidence that is so much more pleasant to have than to hear about."

Somehow he finds opportunity to discuss his attitude to his daughter: "It must be nice to have a daughter." "You cannot know how nice it is. It is like a second wife. My wife knows now all I think, all I say, all I believe, all I can do, all that I cannot do and cannot be. I know also

about my wife - completely. But now there is always someone you do not know, who does not know you, who loves you in ignorance and is strange to you both. Some one very attractive that is yours and not yours and that makes the conversation more - how shall I say? Yes, it is like - what do you call - having here with you - with the two of you - yes, it is the Heinz Tomato Ketchup on the daily food."

Well listeners, we must all conclude that Hemingway is an inspiriting companion to take us on a Big Game Shooting expedition, his prose, his imagination, his picturesque vocabulary, his rhetoric all are enlivening.

Rhetoric - what is it he writes of rhetoric? - "It is the mind working, its ability to work, which makes the rhetoric. Rhetoric is the blue sparks from the dynamo."

Let us leave Hemingway now, but leave him with regret, this book is finished, this hunting trip is over, he has his memories, and he has presented them to us in a book "GREEN HILLS OF AFRICA", from this book we can ~~enjoy~~ enjoy his delightful though sometimes exasperating company under Africa's sun, and around his camp-fires.

"GREEN HILLS OF AFRICA" by Ernest Hemingway.

And now for your library list:

First of all write down the title of the new book by Cecil Roberts, "GONE AFIELD." This is the third of the "Rustic" Series, the other two being "GONE RUSTIC" and "GONE RAMBLING." I haven't yet had time to read through my copy of "GONE AFIELD" but perhaps next week I will be able to devote the early part of my talk to it. In any case you are sure of something exceptionally interesting, and something always different from Cecil Roberts. So for the present write "GONE AFIELD" by Cecil Roberts until I am able to tell you more about it.

Here is a new book by Vicki Baum, "CAREER." Vicki Baum wrote "Grand Hotel" which was most successful. In this new book, the career described is that of Doris Hart, a German immigrant in America, who in the opening chapters of the book is a model, and eventually becomes a world-famous Opera singer. The story is set in America, Italy, and moves to the French Riviera, North Africa, and the lotus lands of the South Seas. "CAREER" by Vicki Baum.

Then there is a new book by Marjorie Bowen, "TRUMPETS AT ROME" which forms the second book of a trilogy, the first of which was "The Golden Roof" published in 1928. Miss Bowen is a very well known writer of historical fiction and biography, and the scene of this new novel dates back to the sack of Rome in 1527, describing how it came to pass, the characters who took part in it, and what it meant in the lives of many people. A story of one of the world's most remarkable men, Duke Charles of Bourbon. "TRUMPETS AT ROME" by Marjorie Bowen.

Here is a new book by John Steinbeck, the author of "Tortilla Flat". It is called "IN DUBIOUS BATTLE" - and the battle is that of the migratory workers of California's apple country, the story of the slow building up of a huge strike, from its inception to its final violent and open revolt. "IN DUBIOUS BATTLE" by John Steinbeck.

Here is a book from R.C. Sherriff, "GREEN GATES" - recommended by the Book Society, and the choice of the Allied Newspapers for May. Mr. Sheriff is the author of that very successful play "Journey's End" which ran for so many weeks in London. "GREEN GATES" by R.C. Sherriff.

"THE ARM OF DESTINY" by Howard Gordon-Page is a novel with an historical setting, turbulent eighteenth-century England, with as the sinister figure dominating the story, the adventurer Joseph Platen. Very thrilling, and the publishers claim that the historical references are accurate. "THE ARM OF DESTINY" by Howard Gordon-Page.

"A CITY OF BELLS" by Elizabeth Goudge describes the life of a quiet cathedral town at the beginning of this century. A quietly moving story, written with great sincerity. "A CITY OF BELLS" by Elizabeth Goudge is recommended by the Book Guild.

A book of short stories by Edith Wharton, "THE WORLD OVER", and the stories are really set the world over, from New York to Rome, skilfully written, and delightful to read. "THE WORLD OVER" by Edith Wharton.

There are three books of outdoor adventure, of which I will just give you the titles and authors:

"RUSTLERS OF BEACON CREEK" by Max Brand.

"COULSON ALONE" by Jack Mann.

"SUNDOWN CAFE" by Kenneth Perkins.

Three books of romance:

"THE PRICE VARIES" by Joan Wales.

"ROSE AND THORN" by Mary Lutyens"

"FLYING SCOTSWOMAN" by Christine Orr.

And there are five detective and mystery novels.

"WOLF'S CRAG" by David Whitelaw.

"WITHOUT MOTIVE" by Winston Graham.

"THE RIGHT TO KILL" by R.R. Ryan.

"IN ANOTHER MAN'S SHOES" by M.L. Eades.

"'WHIP' RYDER'S WAY" by Grant Taylor.

Our humour tonight is from THE BEST SCOTTISH, JEWISH AND IRISH JOKES! Here are a few examples:

Macpherson: "Why won't old Menzies go to his daughter's wedding?"

McKenzie: "He doesn't like to have to give her away."

Mr. McTavish: (inquiring for the son of the house): "Where's young Angus, Mr. McFee?"

Mr. McFee: "He's doon in the shed sharpening the gramophone needles. We're giving a wee party tonight."

An Englishman told a Scot that it was lucky to drop a threepenny bit over Westminster Bridge. Seeing the Scot a few days later looking very gloomy, he asked him what was the matter. "I'm no believing your silly superstitions, mon," replied the Scot. "The cotton broke."

An Irish farmer had some pigs for sale, and a prospective buyer knocked at the door of the farmhouse. The farmer's wife opened it. "Can I see the swine?" asked the caller. "No," said the wife bitterly, "he's out."

Irish K.C. (opening cross-examination): "Now, Mrs. O'Brien, you are, I believe, like myself an Irishwoman."

Some workmen thought to play a joke on one of their number, an Irishman. Seeing his coat hanging in a room with a lot of others, they drew a donkey's head on it in white chalk. When Pat came to don the garment, he stopped in amazement. "Faith," he said, "and which of ye has been wiping his face on my coat?"

Two Jews were in a boat, which upset.

The one who could swim held up the one who could not until he thought he could do it no longer, and said: "Can you float alone, Jacob?"

"Vot's the good of talking business at a time like thith?" cried Jacob.

Father (to Ikey) "What is another word for snake, wid five letters?"
Ikey: "A viper."

Father: "You silly! That's a handkerchief!"

Magistrate: "Where were you born?"

Irishman: "Cork."

Magistrate: "And were you brought up there?"

Irishman: "Yess, sorr, but only two or three times."

These are stories from a little book titled "THE BEST SCOTTISH, JEWISH, AND IRISH JOKES."

Our Great Thought for tonight is:

"What is the use of countless books and libraries if their owners hardly read through their titles in their whole lives?"

(Seneca)